

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed July 3, 2007, Applicants amended claims 1, 4, 18 and 33. Claims 1-23 and 33-39 are presented for examination.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 10, 13, 18, 19, 33-35 and 37-39 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by Inoue et al. WO 03/034519 using US 2004/0241078 as an English language equivalent ("Inoue"), and/or under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated over Mussell et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,882,810 ("Mussell"). Applicants do not concede that the previously pending version of these claims were anticipated by Inoue or Mussell. Nonetheless, Applicants amended these claims to require an acidic moiety covalently bonded to a layer, where the acidic moiety includes an alkyl moiety, or an alkenyl moiety substituted with halogen. Neither Inoue nor Mussell discloses such subject matter. Applicants therefore request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

The Examiner rejected claims 3, 11 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Barton et al., US 2003/0157397 ("Barton"). But, there is no suggestion to combine these references. Inoue discloses electrolytic treatment of a carbon fiber woven fabric in a solution of 0.1 N sulfuric acid. (Inoue, par. 0092.) Barton does not disclose or suggest such an electrolytic treatment. Thus, if one skilled in the art had been motivated to modify Inoue, which Applicants do not concede would have been the case, that person would not have considered Barton. Further, even if one skilled in the art had considered Barton, that person would not have combined Inoue and Barton. Barton discloses providing a coating on a carbon paper by immersing carbon paper in a liquid containing a fluorinated polymer. (Barton, pars. 0055 and 0075.) One skilled in the art would not have been motivated to substitute Inoue's sulfuric acid solution with Barton's fluorinated polymer-containing liquid because that person would have understood that such a substitution would not result in a solution appropriate for use in Inoue's electrolytic treatment. For at least this reason, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Denton et al., EP 079174 ("Denton"). But, neither Inoue nor Denton, alone or

in combination, discloses or suggests the subject matter covered by these claims, and there is no suggestion to combine these references to provide such subject matter. Further, even if the references were combined, the result would not be the subject matter covered by claims 7-9.

Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue. But, Inoue does not disclose or suggest the subject matter covered by these claims. Thus, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 20-23 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Reddy et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,132,193 ("Reddy"). But, neither Inoue nor Reddy, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the subject matter covered by these claims, and there is no suggestion to combine these references to provide such subject matter. Further, even if the references were combined, the result would not be the subject matter covered by claims 20-23. Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 34, 36 and 38 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inoue in view of Tabata et al., US 2004/0241078 ("Tabata"). But, neither Inoue nor Denton, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests the subject matter covered by these claims, and there is no suggestion to combine these references to provide such subject matter. Further, even if the references were combined, the result would not be the subject matter covered by claims 34, 36 and 38. Hence, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Applicants believe the application is in condition for allowance, which action is requested.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

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Respectfully submitted,

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